

What Healthcare Providers Can Do to Prevent Infections

To prevent all infections:

- Follow standard and transmission-based precautions meticulously, use appropriate personal protective equipment, and perform hand hygiene as indicated.
- Ensure that all medical devices and equipment are cleaned, disinfected, sterilized, and/or discarded appropriately.
- Ensure the environment of care is maintained appropriately.
- Speak up if you see co-workers who are not following appropriate infection prevention measures.
- Ensure that information about infection and colonization is communicated during transitions of care.

To prevent central line-associated bloodstream infections (CLABSIs) and catheter-associated urinary tract infections (CAUTIs):

- Follow recommended device insertion practices.
- Follow recommended device maintenance practices.
- Every day, evaluate whether the device is still needed. Ensure it is removed as soon as it is no longer needed.

To prevent surgical site infections:

- Follow a safe surgery checklist before, during, and after surgery.
- When indicated, give an antibiotic before surgery. Make sure the dose is appropriate and the drug is discontinued in a timely manner.
- Follow recommendations for hand hygiene, personal protective equipment, and antiseptic skin preparation.
- Post-discharge, provide the patient with wound care instructions and education on symptoms of infection.

To prevent *Clostridium difficile* infections:

- Use antibiotics judiciously.
- Implement contact precautions for patients with known or suspected *C. difficile* infection.
- Ensure proper cleaning and disinfection of the environment.

To prevent methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) infections:

- Ensure compliance with contact precautions for MRSA-colonized and infected patients.
- Ensure proper cleaning and disinfection of the environment.
- Implement an alert system to enable prompt notification of laboratory-identified or readmitted patients with MRSA to allow timely initiation of control measures.

To prevent influenza infections:

- Promote good respiratory hygiene practices.
- Encourage people in common areas who have respiratory symptoms to distance themselves from others or wear a surgical mask, if they are able to tolerate it.
- Implement droplet precautions for patients with influenza.
- Administer antiviral treatment and chemoprophylaxis to patients and healthcare personnel when appropriate.
- If sick with flu-like illness, stay home for at least 24 hours after fever subsides and limit contact with other people.

For more information on HAI prevention strategies, see:

- <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/surveillance-and-investigation/healthcare-associated-infections-hais/>
- www.cdc.gov/hai